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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

April 9, 1999

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Mr. Lester Snow
Executive Director
CALFED Bay Delta Program
1416 9th Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA, 95814

APR 12 1999

Dear Mr. Snow:

I am writing to request your support for a CALFED grant for a watershed restoration project outside the City of Ione in Amador County. The grant would help cover the engineering costs and watershed restoration efforts at the Newton Copper Mine site, which is adjacent to State Highway 88 on the east side of Ione.

The mine was originally established in the 1860's as a wartime source of copper and was worked several times during periods of war, until it was abandoned in 1947. The tailings and excavations are quite apparent to anyone passing from Ione to Jackson along State Highway 88. It has also been a source of pollution into the Mokelumne River Watershed.

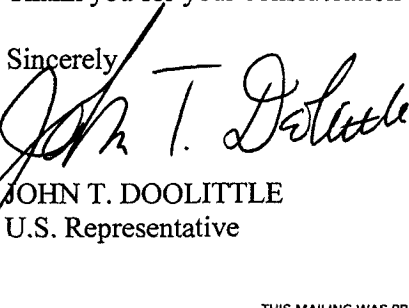
The present owners of the property – who have never operated the mine – have been ordered to restore and clean up the site by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region. The owners responded to the order by commencing studies on a clean-up. The water and soil tests are complete, and the engineering report is nearing completion. The cost of the reports and studies, along with the final clean-up and restoration work itself, have gone beyond the financial means of the property owners.

The owners, in conjunction with the State Office of Mine Reclamation, have applied to CALFED for a grant of approximately \$200,000 to complete the project and provide for monitoring operations after completion. The grant would be matched by in-kind contributions from the State Department of Conservation. The owners would provide the construction machinery and labor themselves.

Due to the close proximity of the Newton Copper Mine to the Bay Delta itself, this would be a worthy watershed restoration project for CALFED's participation. It would also serve as a model for the many other abandoned mine sites throughout the Central and Southern Foothills in need of clean up and watershed restoration work. I strongly urge you to approve this grant application.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,


JOHN T. DOOLITTLE
U.S. Representative

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